Creditable Coverage Disclosure Notice

Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage for Medicare-Eligible Active Employees and Medicare-Eligible Retirees (or Covered Medicare-Eligible Dependents) of Columbia University as of January 1, 2027

Please read this notice carefully and keep it where you can find it.

This notice contains important information about your current prescription drug coverage with Columbia University and your options under Medicare's prescription drug coverage.

This information can help you decide whether or not you want to join a Medicare prescription drug plan. If you are considering joining a Medicare prescription drug plan, you should compare your current coverage—including which drugs are covered and at what cost—with the coverage and costs of plans offering Medicare prescription drug coverage in your area.

Information about where you can get help making decisions about your prescription drug coverage is provided at the end of this notice.

What This Means to You as an Employee or Retiree of Columbia University

As an employee or retiree of Columbia University, or a covered dependent, who is eligible for Medicare, you should keep the following points in mind when considering whether to enroll in Medicare prescription drug coverage.

Medicare prescription drug coverage is available to everyone with Medicare. You can obtain this coverage by joining a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan or a Medicare Advantage Plan, such as an HMO or PPO, that includes prescription drug coverage. All Medicare drug plans provide at least a standard level of coverage established by Medicare. Some plans may offer additional coverage for a higher monthly premium.

If you are enrolled in a Columbia University medical plan, you are already covered by prescription drug coverage that is, on average for all plan participants, expected to pay out at least as much as standard Medicare prescription drug coverage. Therefore, your Columbia University prescription drug coverage is considered Creditable Coverage.

Because your existing coverage is Creditable Coverage, you can keep your Columbia University coverage and generally will not pay a higher Medicare Part D premium—a late-enrollment penalty—if you later decide to join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan, provided you do not have a break in creditable prescription drug coverage of 63 continuous days or more.

Should You Have Columbia University Prescription Drug Coverage and Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage?

In most circumstances, there is little advantage to "doubling up" on prescription drug coverage.

If you join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan, you may continue to receive your medical and prescription drug benefits through Columbia University, subject to the terms of the applicable University plan. However, the amount you pay for Columbia University coverage, where applicable, will not be reduced, and you may be required to pay a separate premium for Medicare prescription drug coverage.

For active employees, Columbia University medical coverage generally pays primary when applicable Medicare Secondary Payer rules provide that the employer-sponsored plan is primary.

For Medicare-eligible retirees, **Medicare generally pays primary and the Columbia University retiree medical plan pays secondary**, subject to the terms of the applicable plan and Medicare coordination-of-benefits requirements.

Before enrolling in a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan, you should carefully consider how Medicare prescription drug coverage may coordinate with your Columbia University medical and prescription drug benefits.

When Can You Join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan?

You can generally join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan when you first become eligible for Medicare and during Medicare's annual enrollment period, generally **October 15 through December 7** each year.

You may also have an opportunity to enroll when you first become Medicare eligible or after separating from employment with the University if you are age 65 or older.

If you lose your current creditable prescription drug coverage through no fault of your own, you may also be eligible for a **Special Enrollment Period (SEP)** to enroll in Medicare prescription drug coverage.

What Happens If You Terminate Your Columbia University Health Coverage or Employment?

If you drop or lose your Columbia University health coverage and do not enroll in Medicare prescription drug coverage within the applicable enrollment period, you could be subject to a Medicare Part D late-enrollment penalty.

If you go **63 continuous days or longer** without Medicare prescription drug coverage or other creditable prescription drug coverage after becoming eligible for Medicare Part D, your Medicare Part D premium may be higher when you later enroll.

The late-enrollment penalty is generally calculated based on the number of full months you went without creditable prescription drug coverage. You may be required to pay the penalty for as long as you have Medicare prescription drug coverage.

If you choose to drop your coverage as an active employee under the **Columbia University in the City of New York Group Benefits Plan** in order to enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan, you will not be able to re-enroll in a Columbia University medical plan until the next Open Enrollment period unless you experience a Qualified Life Status Change.

If you choose to drop your coverage as a retiree under the Columbia University Retiree Medical and Life Insurance Benefits Plan, you will not be able to re-enroll in the retiree plan.

You should carefully consider the consequences before voluntarily terminating your Columbia University coverage.

For More Information About Medicare's Prescription Drug Coverage

More detailed information about Medicare plans that offer prescription drug coverage is available in the annual **Medicare & You** handbook. You will receive a copy of the handbook from Medicare each year. You may also be contacted directly by Medicare drug plans.

You can:

- Visit Medicare.gov for information and personalized assistance.
- Call **1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227)**. TTY users should call **1-877-486-2048**.
- Contact your **State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP)** for free, personalized Medicare assistance.

Remember: Keep This Notice

Please keep this Creditable Coverage Disclosure Notice with your important records.

If you decide to join a Medicare prescription drug plan in the future, you may be required to provide a copy of this notice to show whether you maintained creditable prescription drug coverage and, therefore, whether you are required to pay a higher Medicare Part D premium because of a late-enrollment penalty.

About This Notice

This notice, as required by law, contains important information about how prescription drug coverage provided through the **Columbia University in the City of New York Group Benefits Plan** and the **Columbia University Retiree Medical and Life Insurance Benefits Plan** compares with Medicare prescription drug coverage available in 2027.

Please read this notice carefully and keep it for future reference. You will receive information regarding creditable prescription drug coverage as required.

You may need to refer to this information in the future. If you enroll in a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan, you may need to provide a copy of this notice to demonstrate that you maintained Creditable Coverage and are therefore not subject to a Medicare Part D late-enrollment penalty based on the period during which you were covered by a Columbia University medical plan.

You may receive information about creditable coverage through Columbia University at other times, including before Medicare enrollment periods and/or if your Columbia University prescription drug coverage changes.

You may also request another copy of this notice by contacting:

Columbia Benefits Service Center
Phone: 212-851-7000
Email: hrbenefits@columbia.edu

Columbia University reserves the right to change, amend, or terminate any benefit plan as it deems appropriate. This notice in no way guarantees or implies that Columbia University's active or retiree medical plans will continue in the future, nor does it guarantee or imply that coverage and/or costs will remain the same.